What is claimed:

1. A modular external defibrillator system, comprising:

a base containing a defibrillator to deliver a defibrillation shock to a patient;

one or more pods each connectable to a patient via patient lead cables to collect patient data, the patient data including at least one patient vital sign, the pods operable at a distance from the base; and

a wireless communications link between the base and a selected one of the one or more pods to carry the patient data from the selected pod to the base, the selection being based on which pod is associated with the base.

2. The external defibrillator system of claim 1, wherein the association between the base and the selected pod occurs after establishing wired communications between the base and the selected pod.

3. The external defibrillator system of claim 1, wherein the association between the base and the selected pod occurs automatically upon powering up the base and the selected pod.

4. The external defibrillator system of claim 1, wherein the selected pod provides an audible or visual indication when prompted by the base to confirm which pod is the selected pod.

5. The external defibrillator system of claim 1, wherein the base determines the capabilities of the selected pod after association with the selected pod.

6. The external defibrillator system of claim 1, wherein the base senses the presence of another pod and provides an alert indicating the presence of the other pod.

7. The external defibrillator system of claim 1, wherein the selected pod enters a power save mode if the wireless communications link is lost for a predetermined period of time.

8. The external defibrillator system of claim 1, wherein one of the base and the selected pod provides an alert if the wireless communications link degrades.

9. The external defibrillator system of claim 1, wherein the defibrillator delivers a defibrillation shock based on the patient data received from the selected pod.

10. The external defibrillator system of claim 1, wherein the association process between the base and the selected pod occurs wirelessly.

11. The external defibrillator system of claim 1, wherein the types of patient data provided by the selected pod are automatically restricted when the wireless communications link degrades.

12. The external defibrillator system of claim 1, wherein the defibrillator is automated.

13. The external defibrillator system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the base and the pod contain interpretive algorithms to analyze patient condition based on the patient data.

14. A modular external defibrillator system, comprising:

a base containing a defibrillator module to deliver a defibrillation shock to a patient;

two or more pods each having a patient parameter module and connectable to a patient via patient lead cables to collect patient data, the patient data including at least one patient vital sign, the pods operable at a distance from the base; and

wireless communications links between the base and the two or more pods to carry the patient data from each pod to the base, the base having a monitor portion to display the patient data received from a selected one of the two or more pods.

15. The external defibrillator system of claim 14, wherein the selection of the selected pod is based on which pod is associated with the base.

16. The external defibrillator system of claim 14, wherein the selection of the selected pod is based on the patient data received from the two or more pods.

17. The external defibrillator system of claim 15, wherein the selection of the selected pod is based on the patient data received from the two or more pods indicating a patient abnormality.

18. The external defibrillator system of claim 14, wherein the selection of the selected one of the two or more pods is manual.

19. The external defibrillator system of claim 14, wherein the base collects the patient data from each of the two or more pods.

20. The external defibrillator system of claim 14, wherein the base functions as a central communications hub for the two or more pods.

21. The external defibrillator system of claim 14, wherein the defibrillator module delivers a defibrillation shock based on the patient data received from the selected pod.

22. The external defibrillator system of claim 14, wherein the defibrillator module is automated.

23. A method of associating components in a modular external defibrillator system, comprising:

providing a base containing a defibrillator to deliver a defibrillation shock to a patient;

selecting a patient parameter pod to pair with the base, the selected pod being connectable to a patient via patient lead cables to collect patient data, the selected pod being operable separate from the base; and

establishing a communications link between the base and the selected pod to carry the patient data from the pod to the base.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein establishing the communications link includes data communication.

25. The method of claim 23, wherein establishing the communications link includes transfer of a unique pod identifier from the selected pod to the base.

26. The method of claim 23, wherein establishing the communications link includes direct electrical connection between the base and the selected pod.

27. The method of claim 23, wherein establishing the communications link includes identifying the selected pod.

28. The method of claim 23, wherein establishing the communications link includes exchanging pod capabilities information between the base and the selected pod.

29. The method of claim 23, further including testing the communications link to determine if association is successful.

30. The method of claim 23, wherein the communications link is established upon initial power up of the base and the selected pod.

31. The method of claim 23, wherein the wireless communications over the communications link are encrypted.

32. A method of claim 23, further including identifying the selected pod by triggering a pod finder switch on the base, the selected pod being responsive to the triggering of the pod finder switch by providing an alarm.

33. The method of claim 23, wherein alarms are provided when the selected pod and base lose communications.

34. The method of claim 33, wherein the pod enters a sleep mode after a specific period of time when communications are lost.